

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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NSCE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 SAM-01

SAJ-01 ACDA-05 OMB-01 (ISO) W
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FM AMEMBASSY RABAT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5500

INFO AMEMBASSY MADRID IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

USMISSION USUN

C O N F I D E N T I A L RABAT 02509

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (PARAS 5 AND 8)

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR PBOR MO SS SP

SUBJECT: SPANISH SAHARA: MOROCCAN REACTION TO SPANISH ANNOUNCEMENTS

REF: A. MADRID 3575; B. THE HAGUE 2637 (BOTH NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: GOM REACTED STRONGLY TO SPANISH POLICY STATEMENT
INDICATING DETERMINATION TO SPEED UP DECOLONIZATION OF SAHARA
(REF A) WITH FIRM STATEMENT OF ITS OWN ON MAY 26. GOM NOTED
EQUIVOCAL SITUATION CREATED BY SPANISH STATEMENT AND CONCLUDED
GRAVELY THAT MOROCCO WOULD ASSUME FULLY AND UNCONDITIONALLY ITS
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HISTORIC AND LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES. GOM STATEMENT ALSO

FOLLOWED PUBLICATION IN MOROCCAN PRESS OF MAY 23 SPANISH LETTER TO UNSYG INVITING INTERESTED PARTIES TO CONFER UNDER UN AUSPICES. MOROCCAN OFFICIALS HAVE PRIVATELY EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT SPANISH INITIATIVES WERE A MANEUVER AND SHOWED SUSPICION OF SPANISH-ALGERIAN COLLUSION; ONE OFFICIAL, WHILE CONTINUING TO VIEW MAIN THREAT AS EMANATING FROM ALGERIA, SAW DANGER OF NEW "PALESTINE". IT NOW CLEAR THAT MOROCCANS STRONGLY PREFER MORE LEISURELY EVOLUTION OF SITUATION VIA ICJ AND UN, AND WILL STRIVE TO SLOW THINGS DOWN. RAPID MOVES TOWARD DECOLONIZATION AND POSSIBLE SAHARA INDEPENDENCE LIKELY TO BE PERCEIVED HERE AS THREATENING MOROCCAN VITAL NATIONAL INTEREST. END SUMMARY.

2. ON MAY 26 GOM PUBLISHED REACTION TO WHAT IT DESCRIBED AS "DOUBLE INITIATIVE" TAKEN BY SPAIN DURING UN OBSERVER MISSION TO REGION AND IN WAKE OF ICJ'S DECISION TO ACCEPT MOROCCAN REQUEST FOR AN AD HOC JUDGE TO SERVE ON COURT DURING ITS SPANISH SAHARA DELIBERATIONS. FIRST SPANISH INITIATIVE REPORTED REFTEL A AND SECOND DESCRIBED IN PARAGRAPH 5 BELOW.

3. GOM STATEMENT SAYS THAT SPANISH INITIATIVES, WHILE AFFIRMING WISH TO CONFORM WITH UN DECISIONS, HAVE CREATED "EQUIVOCAL SITUATION AND CLIMATE OF CONFUSION". MADRID, STATEMENT CONTINUES, WISHES IGNORE UNGA DECISION TO SUSPEND ANY DECOLONIZATION INITIATIVE UNTIL AFTER ICJ ADVISORY OPINION IS RENDERED. SPANISH INITIATIVE, IN MOROCCAN VIEW, WILL HINDER WORK BOTH OF UN OBSERVER MISSION AND OF ICJ. SPANISH WISH TO SPEED PACE OF SAHARA DECOLONIZATION, STATEMENT GOES ON, RESULTS FROM DEFECTION OF ELEMENTS, NOTABLY PUNS SECYGEN EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS, FROM SPANISH SCHEME TO BRING ABOUT SAHARA "SUCCESSION" AND FROM ICJ DECISION ON AD HOC JUDGE QUESTION.

4. IN CONCLUSION, GOM STATEMENT MAKES THREE POINTS: A) THAT GOM WILL ASSUME FULLY AND UNCONDITIONALLY ITS HISTORIC AND LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES; B) THAT MOROCCAN PEOPLE ARE UNITED BEHIND KING IN DETERMINATION TO MAINTAIN TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF KINGDOM; AND C) THAT ARAB, AFRICAN AND INTERNATIONAL OPINION SHOULD TAKE NOTE OF GRAVITY OF PRESENT SITUATION.

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5. FOREGOING STATEMENT FOLLOWED CLOSELY PUBLICATION OF MAY 23 LETTER FROM SPANISH UN PERMREP DE PINIES TO UN SECYGEN WALDHEIM ON SAHARA. IN LETTER, DE PINIES RE-AFFAIRMS SPANISH INTENTION TO END ITS PRESENCE IN SAHARA AND NOTES MADRID'S HOPE THAT "INTERESTED PARTIES" WILL "HARMONIZE THEIR INTERESTS" IN ORDER THAT A VOID NOT BE CREATED IN REGION. TO THIS END, LETTER INVITES PARTIES TO A CONFERENCE UNDER UN AUSPICES. SHOULD SUCH PROCEDURES NOT WORK, SPANISH

GOVERNMENT WILL ON ITS OWN FIX A DATE FOR TRANSFERRING POWER, WITHOUT CEASING TO COOPERATE WITH UN ON DECOLONIZATION MEASURES. LETTER NOTES SPANISH GOVERNMENT'S HOPE THAT UN OBSERVERS FROM UN SECRETARIAT WILL BE SENT TO SAHARA TO FOLLOW EVENTS THERE AND TO REPORT TO SECYGEN. IT ALSO RESERVES MADRID'S RIGHT TO CALL SECURITY COUNCIL INTO URGENT SESSION SHOULD SUCH ACTION BE NEEDED TO MAINTAIN PEACE IN THE AREA.

6. ONE HIGH MFA OFFICIAL TRAVELLING WITH UN MISSION OPINED TO EMBOFF THAT DECOLONIZATION PROCESS WOULD BE FINISHED BEFORE END OF YEAR. OTHER MOROCCANS TRAVELLING WITH MISSION APPEARED SHARE OPINION OF NON-GOVERNMENT NEWSPAPERS THAT SPANISH INITIATIVES WERE A MANEUVER, AND TO HARBOR STRONG SUSPICION OF SPANISH-ALGERIAN COLLUSION AGAINST MOROCCO. THEY FOUND IT PARTICULARLY HARD TO UNDERSTAND SUDDEN LEAP TO PROMINENCE IN SAHARA OF PRO-INDEPENDENCE F POLISARIO WHICH SEEMED TO HAVE STOLEN SHOW DURING UN MISSION'S STAY IN COLONY. OPEN DEMONSTRATIONS BY F POLISARIO, THEY CONTENDED, COULD NOT HAVE HAPPENED WITHOUT TACIT CONSENT OF SPANISH AUTHORITIES.

7. ANOTHER HIGH MFA OFFICIAL TOLD AMB INFORMALLY EVENING MAY 26 THAT HE SAW POSSIBILITY OF SAHARAN SITUATION BECOMING AS CHAOTIC AND DANGEROUS SITUATION AS THAT IN PALESTINE FOLLOWING PRECIPITOUS BRITISH WITHDRAWAL A GENERATION AGO. THIS OFFICIAL APPEARED ANGERED AT LATEST SPANISH MOVE BUT HIS MAJOR CONCERN FOR IMMEDIATE FUTURE SEEMED FOCUSED ON ALGERIA.

8. COMMENT: GOM'S OFFICIAL REACTION TO SPANISH INITIATIVES TOOK THREE DAYS IN COMING AND WAS OBVIOUSLY CONSIDERED WITH GREAT CARE. SEMI-OFFICIAL PRESS AVOIDED COMMENT DURING THE PERIOD, ALTHOUGH NON-GOVERNMENT PRESS WAS MORE OUTSPOKEN, NOTING POSSIBILITY OF SPANISH "MANEUVER" TO TRANSFER SOVEREIGNTY OVER SAHARA TO OTHERS THAN MOROCCO.
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9. REACTION REFLECTS GOM'S CONCERN THA BOTH ITS ICJ INITIATIVE AND ITS EFFORTS AT OPENING MEANGINGFUL DIALOGUE WITH GOS ARE BEING RAPIDLY OVERTAKEN BY EVENTS IN SAHARA AND RESULTANT SUDDEN -- AND UNFOVORABLE -- POLICY SHIFT IN MADRID. IT IS NOW CLEAR THAT MOROCCANS STRONGLY PREFER SLOWER EVOLUTION OF SITUATION VIA ICJ AND UN TO MORE RAPID MOVEMENT APPARENTLY CONTEMPLATED BY MADRID AND THAT GOM WILL STRIVE MIGHTILY TO SLOW THINGS DOWN. IT IS EQUALLY EVIDENT THAT CONTINUED EVOLUTION AT PRESENT TEMPO TOWARDS RAPID DECOLONIZATION AND POSSIBLE INDEPENDENCE WILL LIKELY BE PERCEIVED HERE AS THREATENING MOROCCAN VITAL NATIONAL INTEREST. FURTHER ANALYSIS WILL FOLLOW.
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